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MODERN SCIENCE AND MIRACLES

Without miracles the Catholic religion would cease to exist. It is in miracles, principally, that we find the cogent and irrefragable proofs of the character of Jesus as a divine legate, and His claim to be the founder of the true religion. The evidence, however, for miracles can only be given by philosophy, and no valid appeal, either for, or against miracles, can be adduced by physical science. Nor can the pugnacious teaching of the rationalist be put forward as the sober findings of science. Miracles do not conflict with the findings of science, but rather with the interpretations put on those findings, not by the scientists, but by the high-priests of rationalism. Science is in no way concerned to deny the reality of a world unrevealed to us in sense perception, nor the existence of God, nor the possibility of miracles. All that it says, or ought to say, is that these things are matters beyond its jurisdiction, to be tried, therefore, in other courts, and before judges administering different laws.

We find that the theologian proves miracles from the principles of philosophy and theology, while the rationalist dishonestly dons the cloak of science to rail against religion and miracles. The rationalist fancies that philosophy and science are rivals striving for the mastery, when in reality they are partners in the co-ordination of knowledge. Where science and physical research end, there philosophy begins. It is because of this fundamental error in grasping the purpose of science that we hear, not from the scientist, but from the rationalist in the clothing of science, of the impossibility of miracles. The rationalist does not know the meaning of science, nor does he comprehend the basic fact that between the accurate descriptions of sane science and the true explanations of sound philosophy there can be no conflict.

The essential element in the notion of miracle is an exception to, or a derogation from the laws of nature. God's action must be really an intervention in the general order of nature. It is precisely in this fact of the individual intervention that the supernatural revelation of God is manifested, and just in this lies the probative force of the Gospel miracles to which Christ so frequently appealed. A miracle strictly so called, St. Thomas says, is an effect wrought by

the power of God alone in things which have a natural tendency to the contrary effect, or to a contrary way of producing it. So St. Thomas implies that the effect of a miracle is either something which in the ordinary course of nature never happens, or something which in the ordinary course of nature does not happen in this way: e.g., the raising of the dead, or the instantaneous cure of a serious disease by a simple command. A miracle, then, is a sensible, unusual, divine supernatural work.

Now it is with theessential element of miracles, viz., the exception to, or the derogation from the laws of nature with which we are chiefly concerned. We must clearly understand what is the meaning of the term law of nature in science if we are to understand why science can tell us nothing about the possibility of miracles.

Many imagine that a law of nature is a mechanism presenting a necessary chain or sequence of cause and effect which is not, and cannot be broken by an interference from without. Huxley used a sledge-hammer method in attempting to destroy this perennial error regarding the laws of nature, as understood by science. With incisive vigor he denounced such an absurd misunderstanding in these words. "It is in the use of the word'law' as if it denoted a thing--as if a 'law of nature', as science understands it, were a being endowed with certain powers, in virture of which the phenomena expressed by that law are brought about. All I wish to remark is that such a conception of the nature of 'laws' has nothing to do with modern science. A law of nature, in the scientific sense, is the product of a mental operation upon the facts of nature which come under our observation. The law of gravitation is a statement of the manner in which experience shows that bodies, which are free to move, do, in fact, move towards one another. The tenacity of the wonderful fallacy that the laws of nature are agents, instead of being, as they really are, a mere record of experience, upon which we base our interpretations of that which does happen, and our anticipation of that which will happen, is an interesting psychological fact: and would be unintelligible if the tendency of the human mind to realism were less strong."

The real state of the matter cannot be set forth more clearly than is expressed in the sober voice of science uttered by J. H. Poynting, whom Windle eulogizes as the clearest and acutest thinker and accomplished physicist whom he ever knew. "We must confess that the physical laws have greatly fallen off in dignity. No long time ago they were quite commonly described as the Fixed Laws of Nature and were supposed sufficient in themselves to govern the Universe. Now we can only assign to them the humble rank of mere descriptions, often erroneous, of similiarities which we believe we have observed. A law of nature explains nothing, it has no governing power, it is but a descriptive formula which the careless have sometimes personified."

Briefly, then, a law of nature in science is a short-hand descriptive formula, summing up in the fewest possible words the routine of our experience. If the rationalist objects to miracles because they are contrary to the laws of nature as science knows these laws, he says "a miracle cannot happen because it is contrary to a thought-economizing formula". In other words a miracle is impossible because such an event is not described in the shorthand descriptive which sums up the routine of our experience in the fewest possible terms. All that we did was to substitute the scientist's own definition of a law of nature in the wording of the rationalist's objection that such an event is contrary to the laws of nature as science knows them. It is for the rationalist to explain his position.

Again the rationalist does not know the meaning, nor the aims of science. The term "science" has become narrowed down to that form of knowledge which deals with the observation of phenomena—to what is really Physical Science, in which we include Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, with all their numerous sub-divisions. It is true that the older, less clear-headed view of science was that science explained things. The modern view-point is that science offers descriptive formulae. This is an important change which dates from Kirckhoff's definition of the science of mechanics, as the science of motion, whose object is to describe completely and in the simplest manner the motions that occur in Nature. Science aims, then, at describing coexistences and sequences astorsely, simply, exhaustively, and consistently as possible. Its so-called explanations do not amount to more than saying something like this: "Those observed sequences which seem puzzling, are particular cases of chemical law number five and physical law number seven." (J. Thomson.) Since the modern view of science, as expressed by the scientist, is descriptive, we understand, at once, why it cannot clash fundamentally with the possibility of miracles. So much the worse for the rationalist who has almost exclusively built his opposition to miracles on his false view of science and the aim of science.

In the chemical and the physical sciences the questions, how and whence, suffice, but in the bio-psychological sciences, the scientific description is inadequate unless we also ask the question why: but it is a scientific why. It does not inquire into the ultimate significance of the event. There is no attempt at an interpretation. Science does not profess to give a complete account of things. It aims at a description as complete as our sense organs and the methods of experiment allow. It never inquires into the meaning or the ultimate purpose. What is behind it all, how this scientific knowledge of things isrelated to other constituents of our experience, are questions science cannot answer. Science works towards cosmography, to grope after a cosmology is not its purpose. Cosmology belongs to philosophy. It is true that we cannot have idea-tight compartments in our mind, but it is also true that we can have mutual aid from the diverse disciplines and seek after all-round intellectual consistency. In regard to scientific conclusions, we have to ask what revelant contributions may be reached along other rights of way. The masters of science must not allow their cosmography to become insidiously a cosmology and thus usurp the place of the philosopher. Nor must the philosopher dream that science will allow philosophy to interfere in science's description of the universe.

In scholastic language what science says is: Science is entirely directed to the exact representation of theexternal phenomena, it does not aim at the acquisition of absolute truth. Formerly, it is true, the scientists put forward their theories as explanations of the real truths concoaled beneath the phenomena whose laws they recorded. But the modern scientists, tired of fruitless strife and defeat, have ceased to look to their methods of observation for what those methods cannot teach. Their theories are constructed, not to explain phenomena, but to represent and classify them, to foresee the conditions of their recurrence and thus to group them into rational systems, by which much mental labor is saved, and the investigators are put on the track of new discoveries. They do not go ddep enough to discover the real causes, but in their place put symbols between which the same relations exist, as would exist between the realities which are represented by the symbols in their statements and calculations. The scientific ideal is not the pursuit of ontological truth, but the reduction of all partial theories to unity. These theories succeed one another provisionally, because they are symbolical, and they must necessarily be continually modified and completed to fit in with new discoveries.

(Continued on Page Eighty Six.)

JAMES and TRUTH.

In his book on "Pragmatism", William James devotes a chapter, or rather a lecture, to "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth". For a scholastic perhaps the most striking thing about the half hour talk is the identity of the definition of truth as given by James and by the schoolmen's textbbook of first year logic, and the total disparity of their interpretation of the same definition. The situation strikes one as being in a way analogous to that in the Pretorium when the Roman governor asked "What is truth?", and deliberately turned from the Perfect Answer.

We would like to shake hands with James when he tells us early in this article, that the truth of an idea means its agreement with reality. But after the Harvard dean explains what he (or the pragmatists) means by "agreement" and "reality" we withdraw our hand and agree to disagree. Let us chat it out with him. By way of preface, though, let us note that, if our exposition is not clear, we can say with propriety that the meaning of James' lecture is not perfectly obvious. If, on the other hand this personal interpretation is unfair, we welcome other interpretations.

Mr. James tells us that "agreement" means a copy of the object. Our true idea copies its reality. This he very nicely illustrates after the manner of a sensationalist by showing how we get an idea of a clock. He finds a problem, however, in explaining how the copy-view holds when the reality does not happen to be a concrete external object. Waving aside the attempts of others to explain this, and finding a cause of merriment in the intellectualist's "assumption" that "truth means essentially an inert static relation", the professor shows how "more analytic and painstaking" is Pragmatism in asking further, "Grant an idea or belief to be true what concrete difference will its being true make in any one's actual life? How will the truth be realized? What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false? What, in short, is the truth's cash-value in experiential terms?

"The moment pragmatism asks this question, it sees the snswer; TRUE IDEAS ARE THOSE THAT WE CAN ASSIMILATE, CORROBORATE AND VEFIFY." This then is the thesis he sets out to prove,--that truth is not a stagnant property of the idea, but happens to an idea. "It becomes true, is made true by events." Its verity is a process, a process of veri-fication; its validity is the process of valid-ation.

This verification goes on until the practical value of the idea does such work for me and satisfies me to that point at which I can say with exactly the same meaning, "It is useful because it is true", and "it is true because it is useful". "True is the name for whatever idea starts the verification process, useful is the name for its complete function in experience." So truth is retroactive, and consequent upon its established utility. And truth applied to a state of mind is the function of "a leading that is worth while."

Applying this process to sense objects we have sense-vefification; but for immaterial objects, principles and definitions, we have a special

verification in advance, a ready-made ideal framework that needs no sense-verification. The relations of these immaterial objects, principles and definitions are perceptually obvious at a glance, and here truth has an "eternal" character in that once true these mental objects are always true. (This "eternal character", according to James,"does not necessarily belong to truth." To get truth in these latter cases it is only necessary to ascertain the kind, and then apply the law of its kind to the particular.)

Summarily, "realities mean either concrete facts, or abstract kinds of thing and relations perceived intuitively between them;" and James still-- "To 'agree' in the widest sense with a reality can only mean to be guided either straight up to or into its surroundings, or to be put into such working touch with it as to handle either it or something connected with it better than if we disagree." Therefore is truth not static, as the intellectualists would have it; but the conformity of the idea with the object is only the initiation of a process, the reasing of the switch that moves the machinery that makes truth. "Agreement thus turns out to be essentially an affair of leading - leading that is useful because it is into quarters that contain objects that are important." In a word, truth is a leading up to a theory that will WORK. And behold here is that simple thing called "truth"; the thing that the scholastics so offhandedly and irreflectively assume to be an inert static relation.

Here the household commodity of our intellectual life obtains only after dodging in and out among these meshes; only after running down all these leadings and possible verifications.

Well just to save time I am going to stay with the intellectualists, who say, "When you've got your true idea of anything, there's an end of the matter," and I shall be content to let Mr. James and his pragmatists pursue the fantom truth, whether her leading will direct. For what, forsooth, would happen if the goal of her weary leadings would not work?

Robert L. McCormack, S.J.

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FROM THE LIBRARY

The Philosophers' library has six hundred and eighty-six volumes of philosophy on its accession books. Four hundred and twenty-three of these books are English, two hundred and thirty-one are Latin, the others are in French, German, Greek, Spanish. Since September 1, 1925, seventy-nine books on philosophy have been added. The average weekly circulation for the philosophy section of the library has been forty. In addition to the text-books sixty volumes ofphilosophy have been lent out for the year.

HOW GOD KNOWS

For three centuries and more Dominigo Banez, O.P., (1524-1604) and Luis de Molina, S. J., (1535-1600) have slept in peace, but the struggle which they introduced into Scholastic Philosophy and Theology has never yet been settled, and perhaps never will be; since the supreme head of Christendom has interdicted further controversy upon the much vexed question of Grace and Free Will. The dispute was primarily a Theological one, but it had its philosophical ramifications. One of these latter the philosopher meets when he investigates the manner of God's knowing. The dispute makes an interesting subject more interesting, and rescues from possible oblivion several other interesting theories on this same question "How does God know?"

Now no orthodox scholastic philosopher has attempted to defend a proposition which would contradict the words of St. Paul when he says of God, "All things are naked and open to His eyes." God knows all things; His knowledge is infinite, and no scholastic tries to bring the fact into question. Right reasoning but confirms revelation in this regard. But when the attempts are made to explain how God knows the future acts of men, the state of affairs is somewhat altered. Here we have waged some of the merriest battles of scholastic records. They lend a touch of life and color to sometimes dull pages of scholastic annals.

Does God know the future acts of a free being by a divine decree in which He determines what a free creature would do in certain circumstances, coupled with another divine decree to place such a creature in those circumstances and force it to act by a physical premotion? Thus "physically premoved," the creature must act in accordance with its will already predetermined in a divine decree, Without this premotion the creature cannot, under any circumstances, act. According to this view of the matter, God determines by decree what a future John Smith would will under certain circumstances. He resolves next to create John, to put him in those circumstances, and to make him act in harmony with his will already determined before John's creation. Thus Banez explains God's knowledge of the future free acts of man. It is a clear and simple explanation, one which removes all mystery as to the manner of God's foreknowledge. By this system one need not be a philosopher to see how God knows the future. But Molina, and many another since, ask in astonishment, "Where is man's free will?" Banex replies "It is a mystery." He does not deny the freedom of the will, though he seems to do so by his explanation. To save himself, he says that the freedom of the will is a mystery which we cannot understand. That is one explanation. Let us look farther.

Does God, in the abundance of His knowledge, know the future acts of free creatures from the fact that He knows the will of man in each particular circumstance, with each particular object, inclination, and the like, capable of exerting an influence over the will, or otherwise entering into the simple act of willing? It was thus that Durandus elucidated God's foreknowledge, and good Molina himself has been misrepresented as favoring this explanation.

Or does God, knowing His own ideas, which are exemplary of all things, know the future acts of free creatures? Does God, by looking in upon His own ideas, which are, in our order of considering them, previous to any divine decree, know the creature's future free acts contained in His ideas? This is the theory of God's knowledge of the future which is sometimes, though probably wrongly, attributed to Cajetan.

Or again, does God know the free futures in actual decrees, which morally determine the created will to some particular act, though physically the will retains the power of not performing the act? Such is the explanation proffered to us by the sons of Saint Augustine, to make clear the "how" of God's knowledge of future acts of free creatures.

Or lastly, accepting the explanation of the Scotists, does God know the free future acts of His creatures by condetermining decrees: that is, decrees not fixed before future acts, but fixed simultaneously with them and independently of them?

All the above explain how God knows, but in all of these processes either one or both of two difficulties arise. Either God determines beforehand with absolute certainty what man will do, and this destroys man's freedom; or else man acts independently of God, and then God has no previous certain knowledge of man's free actions. In view of these difficulties, we are obliged to seek for a more satisfactory explanation.

The Jesuit philosophical system of the present day,--the one which Molina so capably defended,--denies that God knows the free futures in any predetermining decree. This system makes use of the famous "scientia media", or "intermediate knowledge", by which God knows the futuribles. The futuribles are the things which a free creature would do in certain circumstances if he were placed in them. God knows these futuribles not because He has decreed them, as Banez holds, but because they are true. Further, God knows them both in themselves and in His own essence; but note, not as determined in His essence. In other words, there is nothing in His essence which makes them to be true. They are true not because God knows them, but because they really would happen by man's free will. And it is because they really would happen that God knows them as true.

The fact of God's knowledge of the futuribles is easily denonstrated. How He knows them is quite another question. Molina and his followers admit that it is a mystery, but they regard the Divine Intellect as a more fitting place for mysteries than the free will of man which Banez considers so mysterious. The important point here is that God does know (however mysteriously) everything that a creature would do of his own accord under every possible combination of circumstances. Hence when He creates a man and places him in certain circumstances, He can leave that man free to do as he pleases, and yet know with absolute certainty everything that the man will do.

The Banezians charge that by this explanation the old scholastic adage "Quidquid movetur, ab alio movetur" is violated, and that man's will is moved to action independently of God. The Jesuit replies that is is suff-

icient that God has endowed the will with an actively indifferent power, by which it can act in any manner it chooses, but of course always with the assistance of God and toward some good. An actively indifferent will inclined to good is sufficient, without the direct immediate premotion of Banez, to cause the creature to act, and does not at the same time destroy its dependence upon God, who has endowed it with this faculty and actively cooperates with its every choice. The entity of the act is God's, it is true; the quality, the choice, is the creature's, by virtue of the indifferent power which God has given the same creature in creation.

You may accept any or all of these theories, and still remain a loyal son of the Church and retain your prestige as a reputable scholastic philosopher. You are not, however, aggressively to press your own views upon others. The bodies of Banez, Molina, Cajetan, Durandus, and the rest slumber in peace, as we have said, for centuries; and their souls, we hope, are basking together in brotherhood in the light of God's knowledge.

The whole discussion impresses upon us those other words of the Apostle, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God," a depth which lies unfathomable to the feeble intellect of man in this world of darkness and shadow. We may be sure of this much: God knows what we shall do or neglect to do, whether we shall be lost or saved,--but He knows without curtailing our freedom. It is ours alone to determine our future. To obtain Heaven or Hell is left to each one's choice, so far as the philosopher can see with the pale light of human reason.

Bertram E. Ernst, S. J.

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"Our true peace is to be sought in the right use of that reason, in which is the great root of our responsibility, and the alternative source of our highest happiness or misery. And when we remember that our reason is not our own independent property, but a gift—an intrusted talent—we shall be far indeed from calling her calumniously, with Boyle, 'the old destroyer,' 'the cloud-gatherer,' and far from adipting the pernicious sentiment of the verses:

"Thinking is but an idle waste of thought,
And nought is everything, and everything is nought."

--Rickaby, "First Principles of Knowledge."

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS: I. THE DOCTOR AND THE SOUL

I had scarcely seated myself in the somewhat crowded car when the man next to whom I had chosen my seat introduced himself as "Doootr Robertson." "Father," he continued, "I have always wanted to talk to a Catholic priest about something I have long been unable to see, but I could never find enough courage to call upon one."

"It does take courage, I suppose," said I, with a smile. "Perhaps I could help you right now. What is your difficulty?"

"You believe in a soul, don't you, Father?

"Of course. What makes you ask?"

"Well, it seems to me that if there were such a thing as a soul in our bodies, we ought to be able to discover it. Now, I've been practicing surgery for some twenty years. I have operated on hundreds of bodies, but never yet have I been able to locate the slightest semblance of a soul. Moreover, if a soul is such an obvious reality, why is it that so many of us educated men cannot admit its existence?"

"Doctor, you have advanced a mighty interesting topic, which could keep us going for a long time if we should choose to enter into all its details. In the short time allotted to us I can at most stress the high points and give you a few things to think about. In the first place, doctor, do you admit a difference between living and non-living beings,--an unbridgeable difference, such a difference that living beings cannot spring from non-living beings?"

"Well, y--es, at least it seems so, although I'm not prepared to say just what constitutes that difference."

"All right, then, that's all that is necessary. You needn't mind for the present the exact nature of the thing that constitutes this essential difference,--which for the sake of a name let us call the "vital principle",--as long as you are convinced there's something there. You admit too that we have thoughts and volitions differing essentially from mere sensations, don't you?"

"There's just the rub, Father. I'm not quite so willing to admit all that. I admit that we have thoughts and volitions, but I cannot see why these should differ essentially from the other operations of a human body. Surely there is some difference, but it is only one of degree. I fail to see why these operations of thinking and willing cannot be explained purely mechanically and materially. Why then talk about an essential difference?"

"Doctor, I'm glad that you're broadminded enough to admit that we do have thoughts and volitions of our own, and that they do not float merely somewhere in the air but have a real subject or personal something in which to reside. Now if you will allow me to continue, I will proceed to go a step farther and show you something. You admit,don't you, that metabolism is continually going on in the body?"

"I'd be a fool if I didn't, Father."

"This metabolism also goes on in the nervous system, I believe, Doctor?"

"Most decidedly so; the process goes on there more rapidly than in any other part of the body."

"All right then, you admit that there is a continual breaking down and building up process going on in your body and that you have a renovated body at least every seven years?"

"You seem to know something about biology, Father."

"Now I'm going to try a little psychology. Let me ask you an apparently foolish question, yet nevertheless, an innocent one. Do you believe that you are the same identical person that began this conversation with me fifteen minutes ago; do you believe, do you realize that you are identically the same person that studied medicine some twenty years ago? Can you persuade yourself that it was you and not somebody else that had certain definite childhood experiences which you were always accustomed to associate with yourself?"

"Father, do I look like I am a little 'off'? At least I don't think that I'm crazy as yet."

"Please don't become vexed, Doctor. I warned you that I was going to ask you an apparently foolish question, but I merely wanted to force you to admit that you do recognize your personal identity, that there is such a thing as an intellectual memory. But how can you explain this fact when, as you yourself will admit, your thoughts and your body are undergoing continual changes? Doesn't it seem that there must therefore be something distinct from the body which can account for this fact?"

"Father, I believe you've got me there; at least, I don't see how I can wriggle out of that argument at present. But listen, Father, metabolism hasn't always been recognized as an established fact. It has been only the rapid advance in science during the past few decades that really demonstrated that metabolism is a fact. What proof for the existence of a soul did you have before that time?"

There was a moment of hesitation. "You almost stumped me that time. I never thought of the argument in that light. Yes that's true, we couldn't certainly have used an argument before the facts of that argument were known. But there are other arguments. You mentioned something a few minutes ago about intellectual thoughts not differing essentially from other material processes of the body such as the process of vegetation and sensation. Now, Doctor, if I can prove to you that these thoughts do differ essentially from mere material operations of the body, from sensations, etc., will you admit that they are distinct from the body and must reside in a faculty which is also distinct from the body? Morever, if I can positively show that there are certain higher emotions, such as remorse which cannot be explained as something purely material and hence as such cannot reside in the body, will

you be willing to admit that there is something distinct from the body, yet united to the body so as to constitute one complete human being?"

"Father, this seems intensely interesting and I would certainly like to continue this distussion, - but this is 3200; I've already ridden three blocks past my destination. Is there any time that we could possibly meet again? I suppose you're too busy."

"Not at all, Doctor. How about next Wednesday night at 7:30? Could you arrange to meet me in the parlor at the 'U'? We will continue where we left off tonight. I was to demonstrate to you that the soul is a spiritual something, so that even if you were to examine a million bodies you would never be able to see or touch the spiritual soul."

"Father, I'll be there without fail. -Goodnight."

Ferdinand T. Keeven, S.J.

SEMINAR NOTES

The chairmen of the respective seminars and study-clubs have organized and voted to hold bi-weekly meetings to discuss seminar management and interest. In the first meeting, held Mar. 7, the responsibility of securing papers for publication in THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN was placed on each chairman with reference to his own particular group. Those present at this round table discussion decided to begin systematically to draw up subjects for these papers. These subjects will be for the aid and guidance of prospective contributors. Any suggestions or references will be gratefully received.

First Year

During the past month the following papers have been read by the members of the three study-clubs of First Year:

Are We "Excessive Dogmatists"? . . . . . Mr. Howard Morrison.
Consciousness as a Knowledge Source . . . . Mr. Henry Wirtenberger.
The Objective Validity of Ideas . . . . . Mr. Leo Brown.
Analytic and Synthetic Judgements . . . . . Mr. Raymond Witte.
The Fundamental Principles of All Cognition. Mr. George Murphy.
The External Senses . . . . . Mr. Francis Dietz.
Universals . . . . . Mr. Norman Jorgensen.

The members of the class made a contribution of short proofs for theses fourteen to twenty-five. For the time being, until the men have a better opportunity fully to grasp the class matter, one of the study-clubs has determined to concentrate upon the matter, rather than on a persuasive and popular presentation of it.

Second Year

A list of practical and interesting topics relating to Cosmology is being prepared for use in seminar meetings. Mr. Dent, assisted by several members of the seminar, has completed a reference index for most of the subjects covered by our course in Rational Psychology.

In the last meeting, Messrs Meyer and McCormack defended the existence of the soul against Messrs Byrne and Cahill. At the next meeting Mr. Cantwell will defend 'Free Will' against all opponents.

Third Year

To prepare for the coming examinations, this seminar has begun a repetition of the entire course of philosophy. Each week four theses are prepared and discussed, special attention being paid to succinct presentation of proof and solution of difficulties. Some tangible evidence of the work of these men will soon be forthcoming in the shape of a schematic outlike of scholastic philosophy, with full references to the theses in the various text-books andnotes.

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MODERN SCIENCE AND MIRACLES

(Continued from page seventy seven.)

What would the modern scientist say to the marvelous fact vouched for by the Gospels, in which Christ chaggdd water into wine? From water which contains only O and H, there is no known method in science of producing, by the means Christ employed, a substance containing elements other than O and H. Wine does contain besides O and H other elements. Such a change is contrary to all chemical experience gained from the hundred million experiments carrdd out in the laboratory. Therefore, the scientist concludes that when Christ changed water into wine He did something which cannot be classified under the descriptions of chemical science.

The philosopher reasoning on the conclusion of the scientist says that the hundred million facts classified by the scientist can only be explained by proving that it is the nature of things to act in such a way. The one fact not classified by the scientist is due to the operations of nature being suspended in this particular event. This water was not changed into wine by natural forces here and now operating. The theologian reasonging on the conclusion of the philosopher says that if it was not done by natural forces it must have been done either by a spirit not in harmony with the Will of God, which is contrary to the Wisdom and the Goodness of God; or by a spirit in harmony with the Will of God, or by God Himself. In the last two cases God either directly or indirectly suspended the operations of nature in order to sanction the claims of His legate. The modern conceptions of science furnish us with new material, which may be utilized to put an end to the old quarrel between science and religion. These new views of the aim of science help us to show the rationalist that his so-called scientific objections against miracles are worthless.

Louis T. Keenoy, S.J.

E D I T O R I A L

ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to graduation this year, Mr. Wellmuth will be unable to continue as editor of THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN. His successor, Mr. O'Brien, will act as editor from the present issue until next March.

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REMOVE THE BUSHEL

In an article that appeared in the issue of January 1926, Mr. Dent asks whether this "problem of contact" will ever be solved. We cannot hope to solve the question here; rather we should like to answer it in the Irish fashion of asking another --why should 'contact' for Scholastic Philosophy be a problem? It is the grandest system that the human mind has yet conceived. It has the last answer possible to unaided human reason, for every query. It treats of being, of truth, of God, of the soul, of our thoughts, of the world and physical problems. Its criteriology and logic are indispensible guides for scientific progress and certainty. Today the educated classes are crying for philosophy, a solution of 'Life'; and whether they know it or not, these students are looking for Scholasticism; for no other philosophy can satisfy the needs they mention.

And yet 'contact' is a problem. Recently one of the philosophers has computed the number of men that have completed the course of studies in the Graduate School of Philosophy and Science of St. Louis University. Since the school was founded in 1890 seven hundred and three have received diplomas. Many of these have been engaged in teaching Scholastic Philosophy and all have spent some time in the class room. How many men must have come under their influence. How many men must have come under the influence of Scholastic Philosophy in this country in the last twenty years! for St. Louis in only one school of Scholasticism. And how little Scholasticism influences America today. James was one man and his class, one class. He was not multiplied by seven hundred and three. Why this problem of 'contact' for Scholasticism?

In a paper read before the Conference of the Maryland-New York Professors of Philosophy, at Fordham University, December 1924, Father Michael J. Mahoney, S. J., pointed out that it was "this too intimate linking up of philosophy with theology" that caused outsiders to look askance at our philosophy. May this "too intimate linking" on the part of our own men be another reason why 'contact' is a problem? Do not too many of our men look upon the three years of philosophy as three years of preparation for theology only? For many is not Scholasticism scholastic in the sense of belonging to the schoolroom? Do we grasp our philosophy in such a manner that we are able to apply it to all the complex problems of our times, is it our philosophy of life?

We have become quite interested in this problem of 'contact' and would like to hear some views upon its solution. We all know what a powerful

weapon we have. If we only knew how to use it most effectively. The world is crying for our help and we do not know how to give it. "If the world is to be won back to Christ," says Father Fournier, "philosophy, not theology, will do it." Men have gone into the black night of the "isms". Let us hold the chandle high to guide their erring steps.

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B O O K R E V I E W S E C T I O N

Hephaestus, or The Soul of the Machine. E. E. Fournier D'Albe, D. Sc. E. P. Dutton & Co. Today and Tomorrow Series. (New York).

We do not in the least object to the use of metaphors or mythology, especially in the case of economics, which has sometimes been called the "dismal science". However we do not quite agree with such a peculiar mixture of Mythology and economics as is offered by Dr. D'Albe in Hephaestus, or The Soul of the Machine".

The publishers propose this volume as a companion to Mr. Garrett's Ouroboros but to our mind this volume does not add anything to that discussion except perhaps to accentuate by contrast its factual phase.

Dr. D'Albe traces the "progress of civilization to its origins" and learns that "starting somewhere in the tropics as a diminutive 'sport' allied to the arboreal ape, man learned to use tools and weapons." How simply he accounts for origins! From this origin the spread of the machine is traced throughout the world. This spread is attributed to Hephaestus /who/ "dwelt and worked on Olympus for three thousand years or so, established branch works on Lipari and in Sicily which kept working at full blast until Paul of Tarsus came with his claim to have found the Unknown God who was to establish a new Roman dominion to take the place of the mighty Empire of the Caesars, and was incidentally to sweep away the gods of Rome and Greece alike and establish the worship of a tripartite God who never smiled."

S.B.D.

B O O K R E V I E W S

Ouroboros, or The Mechanical Extension of Mankind. Garet Garrett. E. P. Dutton and Company. New York. Today and Tomorrow Series.

Do we moderns produce for the sake of consumption or do we consume for the sake of production? No, we are not trying to be facetious or spring a riddle. It is a serious question and sums up the theme of an interesting little brochure by Garet Garrett in the Dutton 'Today and Tomorrow' series. Under the title of uroboros--the fabulous snake that swallowed its own tail—Mr. Garrett gives us the story of the rise of machinery in our industrial life which in little more than a century has brought about a revolution in the agricultural, industrial and financial world and which is changing the face of entire nations and now threatens to upset the whole economic world.

The machine which was heralded a century ago as a labor saving device has become an engine of production which must be served. Machines have called millions into existence who otherwise might never have been born and these millions have been crowded into the busy urban anthills which cover the land.

These millions produce no food but they must be fed. The complacent classical economist of yester-year calmly informed us that the surplus product of our industrial plants was to be exhhanged for the wheat and tea of the agricultural nations of the world. Foreign trade was the great stabilizer of the world. The iddustrial nation exchanges its excess of manufactured articles for theexcess of the agricultural products of these nations. Simplicity itself! Yes—but the agricultural nations observed that after many years of such exchanging they were poorer while the industrial nations were steadily growing richer. In other words they realized that this business of exchanging manufactured articles for food and raw materials was a very remunerative enterprise and the result was that they determined to gain these profits themselves.

A study of history shows that machines migrated from England first to the United States and then to Germany, France and Belgium. The latest entries in the field are Japan and Italy with even India and China entering the race. In all these countries there is noted the same rush from the farm to the factory, the same race for foreign markets to absorb the surplus products of all these machines. As the number of competitors for these markets grows, the number of the customers cecreases. Where will it all end?

Mr. Garrett has diagnosed thecase very well and declares that a new principle of commerce must animate the world. He turns to the biological example of symbiosis but fails to touch upon the true and ultimate principle—justice, inspired by religion. He admits that the commercial world will not readily adopt such a change in its present philosophy. He rests satisfied with the observance that man will probably find the way out by groping around until he finds a solution, before he realizes that he has reached it. It is a rather unsatisfactory conclusion to an otherwise interesting discussion.

S.B.D.